

Integrated Pest Management (IPM): An Overview for the Hospitality Industry

Background

In March 2015, methyl bromide, a pesticide restricted from residential indoor application, was used to fumigate a St. John, US Virgin Islands vacation condominium. As a result, a family of four (2 adults and 2 teenagers) suffered from severe methyl bromide poisoning, requiring hospitalization in the intensive care unit. This resource sheet provides a summary of approaches and resources the hospitality industry can use to promote a safe and healthy environment for guests and staff.

Pregnant women and children are especially vulnerable to pesticides exposures. Hospitality staff (e.g., housekeeping staff) are another potentially high risk population, given the potential for long term exposures in the workplace. Human health impacts from pesticides are well documented, ranging from acute symptoms (e.g., irritant symptoms and nervous system damage) to chronic (e.g., adverse birth outcomes, nervous system damage and cancer) depending on the pesticide.

Travelers are increasingly seeking out hotels and vacation spots where they feel safe – and this includes being safe from chemical exposures. There are steps the hospitality industry can take to reduce the need for toxic chemicals. Integrated Pest Management, or IPM, an environmentally friendly and common sense approach to controlling pests, is one such approach. Unlike traditional pest control which involves the routine application of pesticides, IPM focuses on pest prevention and uses less-toxic pesticides if needed. IPM involves taking an effective and environmentally responsible approach that makes use of a variety of tools for controlling pests, not just pesticides.

In summary, we recommend implementing an IPM program at hospitality facilities to promote safe and healthy environments for guests and staff.

What does an IPM program include? (<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/ipm.htm>)

The elements of an IPM program are as follows:

- Develop an integrated pest management plan.
- Keep records using site plans, scouting records, and a log book.
- Inspect and monitor for conditions that encourage pests.
- Keep the facility sanitary and well maintained.
- Identify and diagnose the problem correctly. Decide if control is needed.
- Combine low-risk methods to manage pests.
 - Cultural—change human behaviors and habits.
 - Physical and mechanical—exclude, catch and remove pests.
 - Chemical—kill or repel pests directly.
- Work effectively with a pest management professional.
- Focus on education of staff and build awareness.
- Evaluate the IPM program to identify gaps and areas for progress.

What are some basic IPM pest prevention strategies, to reduce the need for pesticides?

- Reduce clutter
- Seal areas where pests enter the building (such as cracks or holes)

- Remove trash and overgrown vegetation
- Maintain clean dining and food storage areas
- Install pest barriers
- Remove standing water and fix plumbing leaks

How to Start an IPM Program at Your Facility:

Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program <http://www.epa.gov/pestwise/pesp/>

The Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program (PESP) is a voluntary program that forms partnerships with pesticide users to reduce the health and environmental risks associated with pesticide use.

There are two categories of membership in PESP:

- Partners: Organizations that use pesticides or represent pesticide users.
- Supporters: Organizations that do not use pesticides but have significant influence over pest management practices.

In addition to formally signing a statement to support the goals of PESP, Partners and Supporters are required to write a Strategy that describes their long-term approach to risk reduction and annual, measurable activities to achieve pesticide risk reduction.

Each PESP Partner and Supporter is provided an EPA Liaison, who works with the member to provide information and assistance in developing and implementing their Strategy. The EPA Liaisons are these organizations' single-point customer service representative at EPA. They provide information on new pesticides and other EPA activities, assist in developing the Strategy, and provide information on funding to support Strategy implementation.

Check out the Success Stories!

The PESP awarded several participants for their healthy IPM efforts: Press Release: Five Companies Lauded for Reducing Pesticide Risk

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/d0cf6618525a9efb85257359003fb69d/343ddadd9c6207888525767e006dcaf9!OpenDocument>

Beyond IPM, here are examples of Green Certification Labels that include reduced pesticide use as part of the criteria:

- The **Green Globe certification** is a structured assessment of the sustainability performance of travel and tourism businesses and their supply chain partners. Businesses can monitor improvements and document achievements leading to certification of their enterprises' sustainable operation and management.
<http://greenglobe.com/standard/>
- Many companies are looking for ways to improve human health and the environment. **Green Seal's Institutional Greening Programs** provides assistance to companies in: Green Purchasing, Green Buildings Operation & Maintenance, and Green Mail.
<http://www.greenseal.org/FindGreenSealProductsandServices/HotelsandLodgingProperties.aspx>
http://www.greenseal.org/Portals/0/Documents/IG/PHA%20Manuals/Chapter11_Green_Building_OM_Manual_PHA.pdf
<http://www.greenseal.org/GreenBusiness/InstitutionalGreeningPrograms/GreenBuildingOperationsMaintenance.aspx>
- **Green Shield**, a non-profit organization offers a certification for pesticides companies as well as buildings and facilities where their standards are met. <http://www.greenshieldcertified.org/about/>

Additional Resources on IPM for the Hospitality Industry:

Integrated Pest Management for Urban Hotels

http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/p2/business_industry/hospitality/integrated_pest_management_for_urban_hotels.pdf

Resource for Green Practices in the Hospitality Industry
<http://www.epa.gov/region2/p2/hospitality/index.html>

An introduction to Integrated Pest Management (IPM), what it is, and how it can be used can be found on the EPA's Integrated Pest Management Fact Sheet.
http://www.epa.gov/pestwise/htmlpublications/ipm_fact_sheet.html

Controlling Bed Bugs Using Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
<http://www2.epa.gov/bedbugs/controlling-bed-bugs-using-integrated-pest-management-ipm>

National Pesticide Information Center
<http://npic.orst.edu/>

For more information, contact: Region 2 PEHSU serving NJ, NY, PR and USVI toll-free at: 866-265-6201

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